

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIII, Issue No. 352

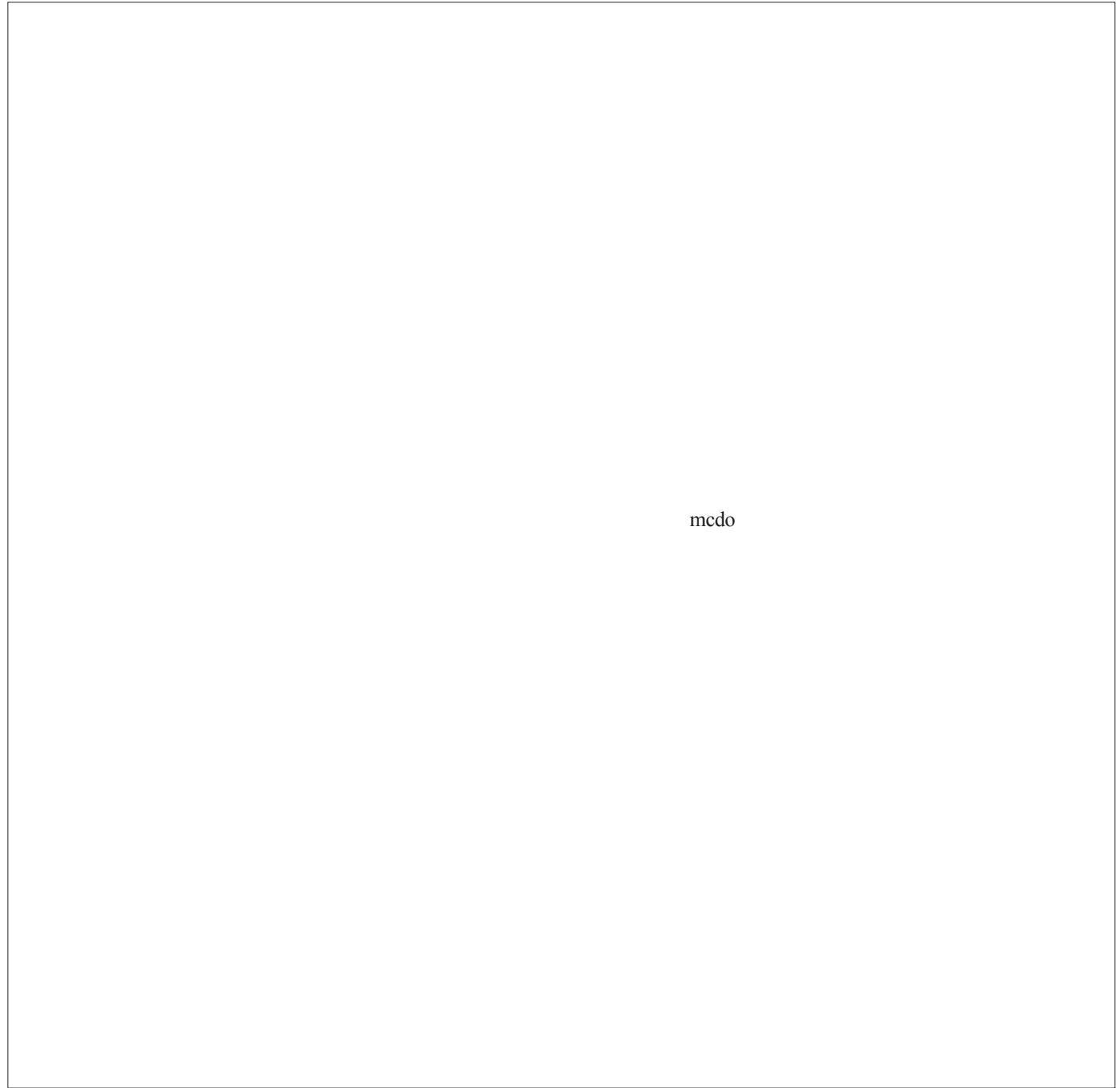
THURSDAY DECEMBER 18, 2003

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I N S I D E

Around the CNMI

Around the CNMI



mcd0

WEATHER FORECAST

PICTURE TIME: 2:25 A.M., DECEMBER 17, 2003
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A monsoon trough extends from 6N130E through a tropical disturbance near 8N145E and finally to near 5N160E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the disturbance are found in the Mariana islands as well as between Yap and Chuuk or between 4N and 16N from 139E to 153E. Just east of the monsoon trough, a surface trough of low pressure continues to near the equator at 168E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are developing north and east of the trough or within 100 miles either side of a line from 9N160E to the equator at 173E, including Kosrae. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across portions of the Marshall islands, between 4N and 16N from 170E to 180.


SAIPAN AND TINIAN

Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.

Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers.

Temperature: Lows near 78. Highs near 86.


GUAM AND ROTA

Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.

Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers.

Temperature: Lows near 78. Highs near 86.


PALAU

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.


POHNPEI

Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: East at 10 kt.


YAP AND ULITHI

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.


KOSRAE

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: Southeast at 10 kt.


CHUUK

Mostly cloudy with scattered showers with a slight chance of thunderstorms.

Winds: Northeast at 10-15 kt.


MAJURO

Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.

Winds: East at 10-15 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
Auckland	Cloudy	61F (16C)	49F (9C)
Beijing	Sunny	44F (7C)	26F (-3C)
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	86F (30C)	72F (22C)
London, England	Cloudy	56F (13C)	45F (7C)
Los Angeles	Cloudy	69F (21C)	51F (11C)
Manila	Cloudy	88F (31C)	71F (22C)
Melbourne	Sunny	73F (23C)	54F (12C)
Miami	Partly Cloudy	84F (29C)	75F (24C)
New York, NY	Cloudy	52F (11C)	48F (9C)
Osaka	Rain	54F (12C)	46F (8C)
Paris	Cloudy	53F (12C)	41F (5C)
Pusan	Rain	58F (14C)	43F (6C)
Rome	Partly Cloudy	55F (13C)	39F (4C)
Salem, Oregon	Rain	54F (12C)	38F (3C)
San Francisco	Sunny	64F (18C)	47F (5C)
Seoul	Rain	52F (11C)	45F (7C)
Tokyo	Rain	55F (13C)	49F (9C)
Washington, DC	Cloudy	60F (16C)	48F (9C)

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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EDITORIAL

South Korea comes of age

South Korea's democracy has reached the point at which protests occur at the ballot box rather than in the streets. The country rid itself of rule by generals less than two decades ago, but the calm acceptance of the impeachment of President Roh Moo Hyun and his recent reinstatement demonstrate a reassuring familiarity with rule by law rather than bayonet.

The National Assembly's quarrel with Roh escalated out of all proportion this year and never should have resulted in impeachment.

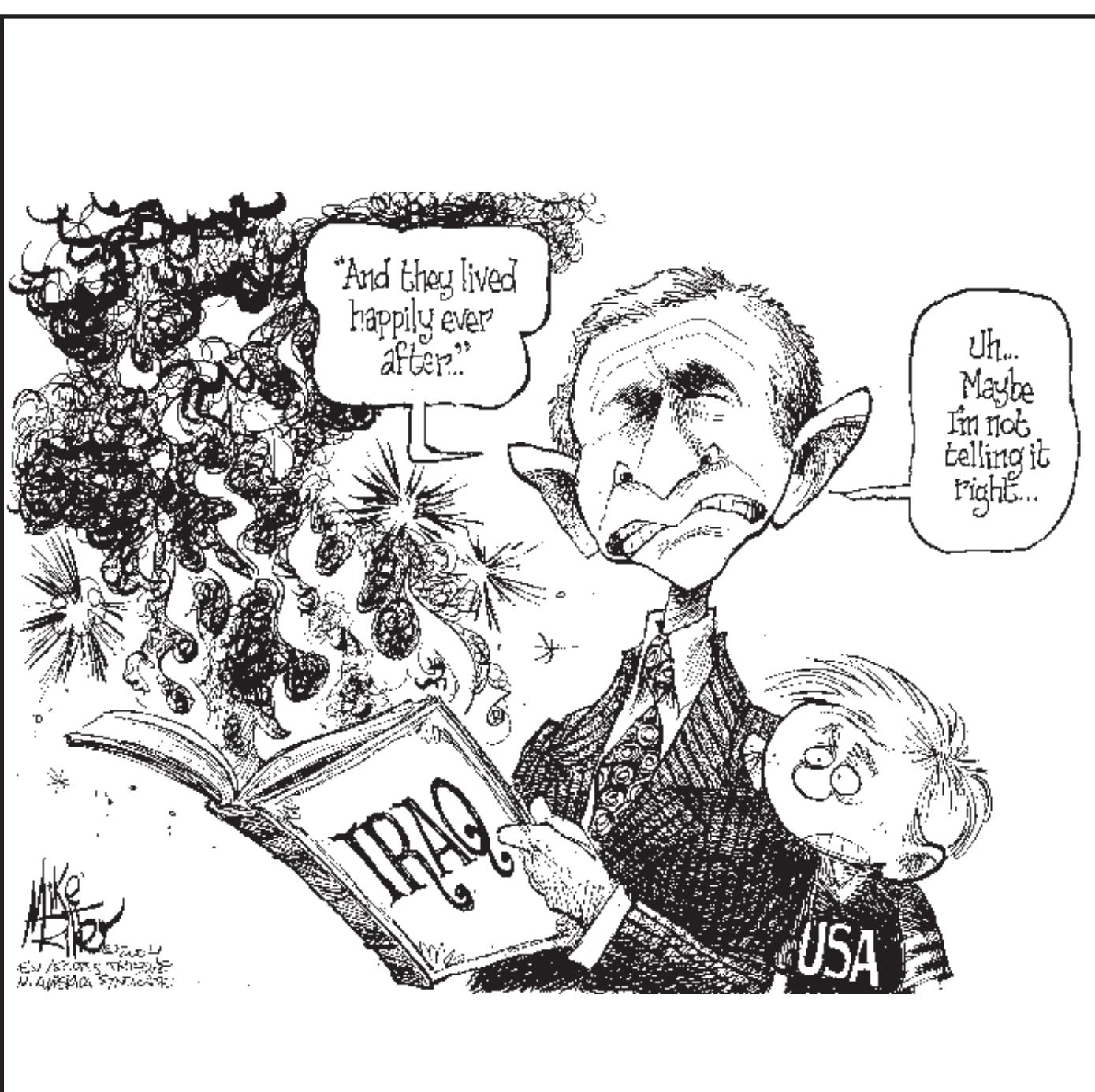
His conservative opponents in the legislature claimed that Roh's remarks in a television interview violated election laws on presidential neutrality. The foes demanded an apology, the president refused and the snowball kept rolling downhill.

After the impeachment forced Roh to let Prime Minister Ko Kon serve as acting president, elections for the National Assembly gave voters a chance for revenge. Roh's supporters won a convincing victory; South Korea will be dominated by leftist parties, for the first time, when the new legislature takes office Tuesday. Little more than a week ago, the Constitutional Court delivered the opinion everyone expected: The impeachment was unjustified.

What's left of the conservative caucus in the legislature will have to find a way to get along with the president if its members want to retain their seats. But Roh should also be more willing to listen to his opponents, especially on the economy. Seoul will need a Plan B if China, South Korea's largest trading partner, follows up on its intention to slow its explosive growth.

Roh has worked to improve relations with Washington and to overcome his pre-presidency reputation as anti-American. Roh took in stride the announcement last week that 3,600 of the 37,000 U.S. troops in South Korea would be transferred to Iraq. South Korea has sent more than 400 army medics and engineers to Iraq, and Roh has promised 3,200 more. How he balances leftist supporters' demands that he not send additional soldiers against conservatives' insistence that he live up to his agreement with the United States may indicate how much of a political lesson impeachment has taught him.

Los Angeles Times



Let's get rid of learning factories

By HUGH OSBORN and MARGARET GAYLE
Special to The Washington Post

The No Child Left Behind Act may be underfunded, but that is not what is wrong with it. Although it is a well-meaning attempt to bring up the lowest third of our students, its real problem is that it amplifies one of the worst aspects of American education: its mechanical, rote nature.

Early in the last century, foundations set up by industrialists helped design our schools to prepare children for factory lives. Kids were to live by the bell, move through schools as if on conveyor belts and, especially, learn to follow instructions. Then they could work in the rapidly proliferating factories.

But the descendants of these corporate barons have shipped those factories overseas. We have factory-based schools in an Information Age—and no factories. The innovative thinking we need to compete in the global economy is not on the agenda.

This factory-based approach, however, is locked in by political gridlock. The right believes in a back-to-the-basics form of education with strict assessment. The No Child Left Behind Act, for instance, encourages rote learning by aligning highly specified lessons with mechanized tests.

The left, meanwhile, has been open to more enlightened forms of learning, but it also supports the teachers unions, which oppose school choice. The outcome is the worst of both worlds: endless, mechanistic test prep and very limited choice. Our kids are paying the price, as seen in the 30 percent dropout rate.

We can do better than this. Here are five reasonable, common-sense principles on which to rebuild our school system:

□ Engage the students. It is obvious that we learn when interested and motivated, and we don't learn —and are

more likely to drop out—when we are bored. This should shock nobody.

□ Use the power of information technology. Our kids live on technology, which can supply not only the infrastructure for learning but also the spectacular learning techniques developed in the games market. Cognitive researchers are finding that games have become intense learning systems that don't rely on drilling and testing. Stripped of their violence, they are a central part of the solution.

□ Get our kids into the real world. Activities must be designed that encourage expeditions to museums, libraries, parks and historical sites and get children involved in their communities. Kids must not be slaves to tests or their computer screens.

□ Return to social learning. Teachers in our one-room schoolhouses used older students as assistants with younger kids. It worked. The older children derived a sense of self-worth, importance and belonging. They learned social skills, had the powerful learning experience that teaching provides and made learning look cool to younger kids. It made the school a real community—not an age-segregated aberration—and made teaching extremely effective.

□ Use the free market. Web-based publishers should make Internet learning games available directly to parents at reasonable prices. This partial home schooling provides educational choice without the drastic measures of full home schooling, private school or vouchers.

MIT and other universities are working to evolve our thinking about advanced uses of technology in education. America leads the world in scientific research, technology, entertainment and many other areas. Why can't we lead in education?

Osborn is an educational consultant; Gayle is executive director of the American Association for Gifted Children at Duke University.



By RUTH L. TIGHE

Well, it's finally here—the commemoration of the battles of Saipan and Tinian; nearly a week of formal observances started last night. It's interesting how narrowly focused it is, honoring only the actions of the American military, commemorating only those two battles—events which took place more than half a century—and two generations—ago. But the Saipan and Tinian battles were only one of several. Battles were also fought on other islands of the Pacific—on Peleliu and Corregidor and Luzon. Many others, besides Americans, lost their lives in those battles as well. Yet there is only one event commemorating local islanders' losses, and none commemorating all the others.

Particularly in light of the close relationship the CNMI has developed with Japan, one would have thought that the deaths of the many Japanese military would also have been honored. But only one ecumenical note occurs during the entire time, on June 15th, when an interfaith memorial service is scheduled to be held for "each and every life lost"—but only in the battles, only for those for Saipan and Tinian.

Moreover, despite the on-going battles in Afghanistan and Iraq, today's climate calls for universality, for an honoring of all peoples, for a focus on peace, not war. It's not the death, deprivation, destruction that should be forever remembered; it is the outcome of the war—the general peace, the political freedoms, the economic successes, and the plenitude so many more people enjoy today than did 60 years ago, that should be remembered. But there's little trace of that in the week's events, either.

Yes, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas would likely not be in existence today if the outcome of the war had been different. And yes, the Americans who fought here deserve recognition and appreciation. But how much more regenerative it would have been if the commemoration had been more ecumenical.

On the topic of things ecumenical, readers might be interested in a new show broadcast on public radio station KRN (88.1 FM, 89.1 FM, depending on your location) called "Justice Talking." It airs every Thursday afternoon from 3pm to 4pm. Topics tackled on the show in recent weeks have included prison reform, rape laws, drug testing, and the desirability of manned flights to Mars.

Letters to the Editor

Saipan Tribune welcomes contributions. All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name, address and, if possible, fax or telephone number. Letters are edited for space, clarity and fairness.

Jobs for graduates

I had the great pleasure of attending the Northern Mariana College graduation exercises last week. Among the graduates was the mother of five of my grandchildren. Living solely from my son's government job, she managed to get her college degree and take care of my son and five children at the same time.

She, like her contemporaries, was duly pleased with the event. She had achieved one of her life's goals. As she turned the tassel on her cap, Carmen saw my son grinning from ear to ear. Carmen said, "Why are you so happy?"

Rich smiled his famous cheesy grin and said, "Payday!"

Celina and her classmates who had received their BS in education were pretty much guaranteed jobs somewhere in the Marianas, most of them on their home island. Moreover, they will be entering the job market at \$28K plus. For Celina and her family, the age-old promise of, "work hard in school so you can get a good job" was coming to fruition. She will get an air-conditioned classroom, probably on Tinian, and the money she makes will be enough to pay off the debts they accumulated while she was in school. After several years of sacrifice, they will have a little cash left over after payday to finally enjoy an evening out with their children.

The next morning we rose from our beds at PIC and found the paper under our door. There was the anticipated front-page picture of the graduates, smiling at each other after the ceremony. Unfortunately for our proud graduates, they lost the headlines to "Minimum Wage Issue Revived," and "NMI Non-Resident Workers Up 16%." The smiling graduates of yesterday were forced to face the sobering thought that even with their newly earned degrees, they would have to compete with nonresident workers for jobs. The outlook for their future suddenly dimmed.

There is a solution to this problem, and it does not require legislative deliberation. It only requires the students to do what the law

prescribes and for the Department of Labor and Employment to enforce the laws that are already on the books.

The Nonresident Workers Act, 3CMC, Div. 4 . Sec. 4431 states, "Any employer who desires to utilize the services of the division in locating resident workers to fill job vacancies or, if resident workers cannot be located, obtain permission to employ nonresident workers, shall notify the Chief and report such vacancies..." Section 444432 states, "Upon receipt of notification pursuant to section 4431, the Chief shall first endeavor to fill the job vacancies reported by the employer by referral of resident workers registered with the division."

So, there is the first step. Anyone interested in working needs to get down to the department and get registered. Don't worry about the wage, just get registered.

Section 4434 states, "The Chief shall not approve Nonresident Worker Certificates for the following job classifications: retail trade clerk, taxi cab driver, secretary, retail trade cashier, bookkeeper, accounting clerk, messenger, receptionist, surface tour boat operator, bus driver—including tour bus driver, and telephone switchboard operator."

I know what the pat answer is: Locals won't work for \$3.05. True. True. But, who said anything about minimum wage being the wage? After all, by definition, the minimum wage is the lowest wage that can legally be paid in the CNMI. Who says the employers must pay the minimum?

And, keep in mind that for some unemployed persons, \$3.05 an hour is insufficient compared to the benefits they already receive from the government, such as food stamps and health insurance.

Let the market dictate wages. If companies are told that they must hire U.S. citizens or they just won't be able to have a cashier, a clerk or a bookkeeper, then they will have to offer a price the local market will bear. When Labor and Employment call you with a job opening and tell you it is \$3.05 an hour, tell them

propitious, appropriate, if the people of Pagan were given a voice in the decision-making process of how such funds were spent, a voice in the design and implementation of whatever does get built there.

While on the subject of Pagan, readers might be interested in checking out the web site "www.chamorro.com/community/pagan/calculator.html" which has been put together to compare potential revenues for the Azmar mining company and the CNMI under a variety of scenarios. Says Pete J.P. Perez, who has taken a significant leadership role in providing information about Azmar's mining proposal to the general public, "The calculator demonstrates that the flat 7 percent of gross sales deal [which is what is being proposed] is extremely one-sided in favor of Azmar and becomes worse as the price goes up and costs of production goes down."

The full report of the governor's supposed accomplishments on his 10-day trip to Washington and Hawaii has not yet been made—he has not yet returned—but based on reports received so far, there does not seem to have been a compelling reason for the trip. The people of the CNMI, in addition to electing the governor, also elected a separate representative to Washington, D.C. There is nothing in what has been reported so far that could not have been accomplished by the aforesaid Washington Rep. Judging from the governor's inability to let the Washington Rep do his job, maybe a law ought to be passed limiting the term of the Washington Rep—before the incumbent gets so used to that job that he can't function in any other.

Let's see if I've got this right. The 6th CNMI Legislature passed a zoning law, later amended by the 7th and 8th Legislature. In accordance with that law, Saipan and Rota (and Tinian?) adopted local zoning codes for their own islands. But the Saipan local delegation of the 9th Legislature voted to suspend the zoning code for Saipan (which the AG's office claims was not valid, but let's not confuse things). In the meantime, the 14th Legislature has introduced House Bill 14-21 to repeal and re-enact the entire original CNMI-wide zoning law. And just now, the Saipan local delegation has voted, via House Local Bill 14-18, to lift the suspension of Saipan's local zoning code—even though the intention is to immediately amend it. The reason being given is that House Bill 14-21 cannot pass without prior passage of HLB 14-18. Make sense? Not to me!

My apologies to other Cha Cha Junior High School—as well as elementary schools in the Public School System—I had not realized that they, in addition to Hopwood Junior High School, also celebrated the promotion, rather than graduation of their students to the next level of either Junior or Senior High School, in local finery rather than expensive caps and gowns. Let's hope the trend trickles down to all those silly and unnecessarily elaborate and expensive kiddie "graduation" ceremonies.

to make a better offer. Labor and Employment will have to call every person on the list until they find someone who will work for a mutually agreed upon wage.

How will the stores cover this increased cost? They will take the extra \$10 or \$20 a day it costs to pay for an employee who is a U.S. citizen and spread it out at a penny a piece on the various products in their store. So we have to pay an extra two cents for a can of Spam. At least we will know that part of the cost is going to a U.S. citizen, one of our own most likely, and into our own economy.

When dollars we create locally are spent on alien labor and foreign-owned stores, a large percentage of those U.S. greenbacks are remitted to foreign ports. That is a drain on the local economy and contributes to America's growing negative gold flow. On the other hand, dollars spent on American labor, of whatever ethnic background, remains in our community and rotates among other local businesses that also employ US citizens and are the very foundation of our economy.

The Department of Labor has the responsibility to enforce this law, but probably lacks the manpower. They will need enough money in their budget to pay the wages of enforcement personnel who will need to visit every store in the CNMI. They will need to ask all employees to see their work permits, write down their job descriptions and the dates of permit expiration..

It is only proper to pay due respect to those companies that do hire locals above the current minimum wage. Many companies do go out of their way to hire locals, giving them training and promoting them into management positions. Kudos to those who do.

All we need to do is enforce the laws that are already on the books.

Don A. Farrell
Marpo Heights

Our World At War

jet holding

wellsfargo
ww2
+red

telesource ww2
cmyk

joeten 60th ww2

pls. reduce to fit

verizon
60th ww2
cmyk

triple j

United States

Dollars & Sense



bank of saipan

United States

kambara

tribune



stevedore

hermans
+red

Life & Style

tribune clasified ad

Life & Style

Finding Dad in each and everyone

By CASSIE DLG FEJERAN
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

What is Father's Day? I hear the word at least once a year, but I never seem to grasp the meaning of it. Others would say it is the celebration of fatherhood, the person who provides all the needs in the house, the backbone of the family. Come to think of it, I can't say that I know how that feels like. I don't have a father.

Of course, that cannot be true. It takes two to make a child; in my case, though, it took just my mom to raise four children. In my 15 years of growing up, whenever I long to connect to my Dad, I would visit him in the cemetery. I was 5 years old when he passed away. It was a tragic accident. My sisters and I were devastated, but the pain felt by my mother and brother was greater.

Though my mom always got full credit for our accomplishments, she could not have done it without my brother by her side. He was like a father figure. Without the gray hair, the deep voice,

the big strong hands, my brother was still able to take care of us as if he were our very own father.

He was young at the time, but that did not stop him from taking on the responsibility. He cooked, cleaned, and even watched us at home when my mom would be at work. He was there for us; with him, we never felt alone.

Over the years, I have come to find that I have contributed to the family as well. Helping my sisters with their school work, cleaning, and helping my mom at work, I see myself taking on aspects of the father figure that I wanted badly as a child.

My family has created a bond that will remain within us for the rest of our lives. I can't say that it was created through the death of my father, but instead through the responsibilities each one of us took in the place of my father.

Eddie John's manly labor around the house, Rosie's cooking, Jonie's hospitality, and my ability to help my mom with chores all formed the father that we wanted in life.

Though it was hard, the four of us pulled together. My mom is the foundation in the family. She is what brought us here to this world, and she is who was there with us through thick and thin.

I always wondered what life would be like if Dad were still alive. Then again, I probably would not be writing this article. It always crossed my mind, if I would still be the same person I am today. I know that there are many people out there who can relate to me. Whether their father passed away, isn't with the family, or is off island, we all share the same thoughts. Where would I be now if my father is here with me?

I don't quite have the answer for that, and I probably never will. However, all I can say is that life would be different for me. I will probably have a different definition of Father's Day.

My father left us on the day before my mom's birthday, two days after Father's Day. Now I find myself in the same place every year, for this Father's Day is the day my father passed away.

A poem for my father up above

By CASSIE DLG FEJERAN
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

I wish I could say I remember you, but then I would be telling lies
I can only remember the day when you took us by surprise

It wasn't a good surprise for you were in pain
The day you lay in the hospital, and mom went insane

I was a bit confused of the situation going on
But my mom made me understand when she sang for us your song

It was not long after the funeral when she taught us the lyrics
From then we learned that you gone couldn't be fixed

At times I feel alone, I pray you're there with me
As I sing to the song, letting my emptiness set free

Daddy in heaven, Daddy in my heart
Daddy I love you, oh daddy I do
In my heart I'll keep you, locked up forever
Daddy I love you, oh daddy I do

Then in that split second, I feel your presence in the room
I wipe away the tears knowing that we'll meet soon

trib dad

Keeping the lines alive with Dad

By CASSANDRA HAMMAN
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Seven weeks have passed since I traded chilly Seattle for this rainy paradise. Tanned and acclimated, I sit here twirling my frizzy blond strands wondering what my father is doing wondering what he's dreaming of because he must be sleeping at this hour on the mainland.

I have not talked to my dear ol' dad since I arrived, which is odd due to my situation: in the midst of severe car troubles, which automatically leads to financial disabilities, I am unknowing of a pending contract with PSS, I am living by myself, looking after my own butt, while still trying to hold onto some glimmer of spontaneous youth.

My father is the classic figure and still treats me like his little ballerina, but is always eager to give dissertations on money management, discuss politics; education and most of all give me advice! Like I said, I have not called him. Why? This island sucks you into its humid crevasses and all of a sudden I am lying on Micro Beach hung over after a night of late night writing followed by multiple vodka tonics and random menthol cigarettes, reminding myself that, "Dude, I still have to buy a calling card. Damn!"

I know my dad. He is going through the repetitions of everyday life— thawing chicken for dinner, doing multiple loads of laundry and assisting my mother with her countless hours of real estate work. He is caught up, too. Like everyone is around the world. The typical hustle and constant routine that so

many of us get used to, even in the realm of island time.

When the lights went out last night and my head hit the damp sheets, I reminded myself of the little things that touch me and what I need to hear—like the dorky laugh that springs from my dad's poor lungs every time he makes an extremely cheesy joke or the way he clears his throat before discussing a pressing issue regarding some article he read in Forbes magazine. These are the quirks I used to despise in my selfish and self-righteous teen years. Now I hold them dear.

Many people on Saipan today will be in the company of their dad. They will make him a cake and kiss him on the cheek. They will thank him for all his wisdom, his hard work, his dedication and strength. Others will regret and question their childhood; some will be like me and miss the warmth of a father's embrace. Whatever the case, there is always a man in someone's life.

While my dad is thousands of miles away, I can still see him in my mind today. I can picture his beautiful thick eyebrows coming together as he stares at the horizon on his sailboat or the bump on his nose that resembles my own. These are the little things that make life rich and full of sentimental flavor.

Even though we all are caught up and strung along a long line of responsibilities and everyday activities, we always can find the time to say a prayer or give a call to daddy. Come on, now. I will today. Now, where the heck do I buy a calling card?

In search of a missing father

This question swims in my mind all through the night. Like a nightmare, it pulls and wildly screams at me while I grope for an answer. I keep forcing myself to be still as the question pinches my soul, insisting that I wake up.

So innocently asked but so loaded with vivid emotions, intrigued by the absence of his father. Young as he is, he knows that somehow, his life is incomplete because of a father he can't play with, talk to, and share the littlest of his triumph.

This question haunts me even now that sometimes, I talk to the stars, the angels, and even the trees to help me come up with a good answer. One that I know he would be pleased to hear. One that would not hurt him—a pain, I know my kisses would not heal.

His father left with no apparent reason at all. A reason that only his Dad and I know. A reason that no one will understand because of its immaturity and its superficial meaning.

But he left. And I was left alone with a son to raise, to feed, and to educate. Despite the hurt, my son is growing up with all the love I can give, with all the tenderness I can



Where is my father?

The question reverberates in the core of my being. Appalled and shaken, the question brings out a truth that, as much as we would like to ignore it, we both know that something is missing in his life.

one who fathered him abuses his mother? Or this father doesn't have the balls to work hard and fight for the rights of his children.

Although my son's father is none of these, the question verily remains. A father might be

the missing link to his person, but indeed a link that can be traced in due time.

If there is one prayer in my heart, it would be that my son will grow up to be a man of respect, of ideals, of love, and determination. I don't need heroes, and I don't want my son to be one of them. I want him safe and sound that I pray won't be able to touch him to the core of his being.

And I know that the day will come when he will do everything to meet his father but would it be the same? Knowing the years were wastefully spent and time had erased the good memories that should have been there in the first place?

And when the time comes that my son asks again where his father is, I pray I would know the answer. My son might be missing his father, but who missed out the most?

He missed being a father to a son that brings joy to the hearts of many, a son who respects others and gives what he can to make me laugh, to make me feel so loved. A son that only a single mother can have. A son that a coward father can never have and will never have, no matter what.

BY THE NUMBERS

Facts and figures on Father's Day

The idea of Father's Day originated with Sonora Dodd of Spokane, Wash., while listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909. Dodd wanted to honor her father, William Smart, a widowed Civil War veteran who raised his six children by himself on a rural farm. June was chosen for the first Father's Day celebration, proclaimed in 1910 by Spokane's mayor, because it was the month of William Smart's birth. The first presidential proclamation honoring fathers was issued in 1966 when President Lyndon Johnson designated the third Sunday in June as Father's Day. It has been celebrated annually since 1971.

66.3 million—Estimated number of fathers in the United States today.

Father's Day Gifts

Neckties lead the list of Father's Day gifts. A good place to buy dad a tie or a shirt might be one of nearly 11,000 men's U.S. clothing stores. Sales at men's clothing stores exceeded \$750 million in both May and June of last year.

Other popular items for Fa-

ther's Day include those found in dad's toolbox, such as hammers, wrenches and screwdrivers. You could buy these items at any of the nation's 14,837 hardware stores.

22,468—Number of sporting goods stores in the United States. These stores are good places to visit for such traditional gifts for dad as fishing rods and golf clubs.

Mr. Mom

105,000—Estimated number of "stay-at-home" dads. These are married fathers with children under 15 who are not in the labor force primarily so they can care for family members while their wives work outside the home. Stay-at-home dads care for 189,000 children.

2 million—Number of preschoolers whose fathers care for them more hours than any other child-care provider while their mothers are at work. This is a ratio of about 1-in-5 preschoolers of employed mothers.

How Many Fathers

25.8 million—Number of fa-

thers in married-couple families with their own children under 18.

Among these:

□ 2-in-10 are raising three or more of their own children under 18.

□ 1-in-10 are raising their own infants under age 1.

□ 1-in-8 are under 30.

□ 4 percent are 55 or over.

□ 2 percent live in the home of a relative or a nonrelative.

□ 6-in-10 have an annual family income of \$50,000 or more.

Among these fathers:

□ 10 percent are raising three or more of their own children under 18.

□ 45 percent are divorced;

34 percent have never married; 17 percent are married with an absent spouse; and 4 percent are widowed.

□ 10 percent are raising their own infants under age 1. (This percentage is not significantly different from the corresponding rate for fathers in married-couple families.)

□ 22 percent are under 30.

□ 5 percent are 55 or over.

(This percentage is not significantly different from the corresponding rate for fathers in married-couple families.)

□ 13 percent live in the home of a relative or a nonrelative.

□ 24 percent have an annual family income of \$50,000 or more.

3-in-10—The ratio of children under 18 living with their single father and his unmarried partner. In contrast, only 1-in-10 children who lived with their single mother shared the home with mom's unmarried partner.

Dining with Daddy

60 percent—Percentage of children under 6 years old living with married parents who eat dinner on a daily basis with their fathers.

24 percent—Percentage of children under 6 years old living with married parents who eat breakfast on a daily basis with their fathers.

88 percent—Percentage of children under 6 years old living with married parents who are praised by their fathers at least once a day.

Farmer's everyday routine gives life lessons to son

By AVIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: My dad, Alvin Hennerberg, who is now 78, is a retired farmer living in Nebraska. He and my mom, Elaine, have been married for 50 years. A few years ago, as I reflected upon his role in my life, I realized what a strong role model he has been through his daily rituals and work. Even though I didn't grow up to be a farmer, what he taught me has translated into how I conduct my daily life.

I put some of the lessons I learned from him in writing and gave it to him for his birthday.

I suspect many sons and daughters have similar sentiments about their dads on this Father's Day. There may be sons and daughters who would enjoy reading them, passing them along to their fathers, and telling them that they, too, learned important life lessons that only a dad can teach.

GARY HENNERBERG, GRAPEVINE, TEXAS



Dear Abby

DEAR GARY: The wisdom you learned from your father is classic and deserves to be shared. You have done him proud. Read on:

WHAT I LEARNED FROM YOU

□ Make Hay While the Sun Shines

When it's sunny and the forecast is good, bring out the equipment and take advantage of the circumstances of the day. Not every day is sunny, and not every day in life brings opportunity. I learned from you that when times are good we should make the most of them.

□ Sharpen Tools on a Rainy Day

When it rained and we couldn't go to the field, we used our time wisely by sharpening our tools, doing maintenance, or other tasks that would give us a jump start on the season. I learned from you that rainy days are actually a gift from God to refresh, renew and make us better.

□ Keep Machines Cleaned and Maintained

We washed the equipment and conducted routine maintenance as an automatic ritual. It made them look years newer than their actual age, and cost less to operate in the long run. That attitude you instilled in me continues to this day. I take care of my belongings and treat them with respect.

□ Stay Between the Lines

A clean field requires staying between the rows when cultivating it. When you stray outside the rows, you'll needlessly destroy precious crops. I stay within the lines in my personal life and do what's right for my business associates. I learned from you to be careful not to do anything that would destroy what we cultivate.

□ Take the High Road

An improper act shouldn't result in an improper response. Better to take the high road and be able to hold your head up, knowing you did the right thing. I learned from you that often the best response is silence, and that good fortune results when you treat people with respect.

□ Go to Church Every Sunday and Trust God

We did it. It's a lifelong habit you instilled in me. It has reinforced in me the real priorities of life and family. And, equally important, it has given me the freedom to know that at the end of the day, and at the end of time, everything will be all right.

TO FATHERS EVERYWHERE—BIRTH FATHERS, STEPFATHERS, FOSTER FATHERS, TOO: Happy Father's Day to all of you. And to my own father, Morton Phillips in Minneapolis, a Happy Father's Day to my one and only "Pop."

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2004 **27**



Mickelson, Maruyama tied for Open lead

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP GOLF WRITER


SOUTHAMPTON, N.Y.

(AP)—Phil Mickelson is developing a healthy appetite for majors. Long known as the lovable loser, Mickelson looked like the man to beat Friday in the U.S. Open with a flawless round of 4-under 66 at Shinnecock Hills that left the Masters champion tied with Shigeki Maruyama and in great position to capture the second leg of the Grand Slam.

"Phil the Thrill" appears to be a thing of the past. Mickelson kept his driver in the bag, kept big numbers off his card and made every putt inside 8 feet—the kind of golf that usually wins a U.S. Open.

And if anyone thought he would be satisfied after finally slipping on a green jacket, forget it.

"I really haven't felt that sense of relief," said Mickelson, who ended an 0-for-42 drought at Augusta National. "What I have felt is a sense of excitement and anticipation. I can't wait for the upcoming majors now because I feel like I'm onto something to play well in the big tournaments."

Cheered on by a raucous crowd that loves Mickelson as much as he loves New York, he finished two trips around Shinnecock Hills at 6-under 134. Maruyama joined him late in the afternoon with a 2-under 68, letting a chance to lead a major by himself for the first time slip away when he drove

into the rough on his final hole and made bogey.

They will be in the final pairing Saturday, and Maruyama knows who will get the loudest cheers.

"I will get ear plugs for tomorrow," he said.

Jeff Maggert had a 67 and was one shot behind, while former U.S. Open champion Retief Goosen and Fred Funk each had a 66 and were at 4-under 136.

Shinnecock Hills was plenty tough but once again lacked the wind that usually terrorizes the world's best players. Still, it only accepts the best golf, which was evident on a leaderboard that featured all the top players.

Well, all but No. 1.

Ernie Els birdied four straight holes to jump into contention and finished with a 67, only three shots out of the lead at 137. Vijay Singh had a 70 and was another stroke behind.

As for Tiger Woods, he spent much of the round flirting with the cut line until a couple of big par saves, back-to-back birdies and an 8-foot par putt on the final hole gave him a 69. He was at 141, seven shots behind and still holding out hope.

"The great thing about it is the guys aren't going to run away and hide on this golf course," Woods said.

Maybe not, but catching Mickelson is no picnic.

Lefty spent three days at Shinnecock Hills last weekend, learning all the nuances on the links-styled course. He attributes his great play more to preparation than a burden being lifted from ending his major drought.

"I feel as though I'm not having

any surprises," he said. "I know that if I hit it over here, I'm OK; if I hit it over here, I don't have a chance, and so forth. I think that has given me a lot of confidence playing the course."

Angel Cabrera had a 71 to join Els at 3-under 137, while '95 U.S. Open champion Corey Pavin had a 71 and was in the group at 138 with Singh.

Jay Haas, the first-round co-leader trying at 50 to become the oldest winner of a major, made double bogey on the final hole for a 74 and slipped six shots behind.

Mickelson had to play three holes Friday morning to complete his first round, and he immediately got in trouble by going long on the par-3 seventh. His ball was buried in a thick mess of grass, and he faced a steep slope to a green that went down toward the bunkers.

He chopped it up the hill in a safe place, rolled his par putt some 8 feet by and holed that for a worthy bogey.

"It could have easily been worse, so I was very pleased to make bogey there," he said.

Mickelson followed with a 12-foot birdie and closed out his 68, and those pivotal putts carried him in the second round. During one stretch on the front nine, he made five consecutive putts between 5 and 10 feet. One was for birdie, the rest to save par.

His control off the tee was phenomenal, mostly with a 3-wood.

"Left chimney," caddie Jim MacKay told him on the ninth tee, picking out the target from the clubhouse high on the hill.

The back nine looked more like a Main Street parade, not a major championship. Mickel-



AP
Phil Mickelson reacts to a birdie putt on eight during the second round of the U.S. Open Friday, June 18, 2004, at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club in Southampton, N.Y.

Another perfect shot.

Through it all, the size of the gallery swelled, and they held nothing back.

"Win it for the New Yorkers," one man cried.

The back nine looked more like a Main Street parade, not a major championship. Mickel-

son looked both ways, grinning,

smiling, feeling like he was the luckiest man alive. In between this celebration—or was it a coronation?—he even hit a few golf shots, and most of them were pure.

"That's the way we're all striving to play—the way he's playing

now," Kirk Triplett said. "There are a lot of hard shots out there, and he hit a lot of good ones."

Mickelson made them all look easy.

He opted for fairway metals off the tee and rarely left the middle of the fairway. A 6-iron into No. 12 hopped hard and trickled just inside the approach of Triplett, giving Mickelson a perfect read from about 18 feet. It was similar to his walk-off birdie at the Masters, when Chris DiMarco putted first on the same line.

"I call it being 'DiMarcoed,' and it's a good thing," Mickelson said. The putt was good all the way, putting Mickelson alone in the lead at 5 under.

The par-5 16th—a hole he played in 6 over to cost him the '95 Open—was executed to perfection. He hit 3-wood off the tee, 4-iron into the bunker and blasted out to 3 feet for birdie.

He missed only three fairways and three greens, the recipe for winning a U.S. Open. But that's not what caught Mickelson's attention as he looked at a sheet with his statistics.

"Minus 6," he said.

Equally pleasing was the reception he got at every turn, none greater than the 18th hole.

"I can't imagine what a great feeling Corey Pavin had in '95, to have that amphitheater effect and to have that type of ovation," Mickelson said. "I was able to experience that this year at Augusta, and it's awesome."

Nothing would be sweeter than hearing it again Sunday before a New York gallery that loves Lefty for all the right reasons.

Jackson quits Lakers; Shaq wants trade

By JOHN NADEL

AP SPORTS WRITER

EL SEGUNDO, Calif. (AP)—The Zen Master is done coaching the Los Angeles Lakers and his two biggest stars could be leaving, too. Phil Jackson, one of the most successful coaches in NBA history, won't return as coach of the Lakers, the team said Friday. Meanwhile, Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant took steps that could have them playing elsewhere next season.

A team source told the AP on condition of anonymity that O'Neal had requested a trade. And as expected, Bryant became an unrestricted free agent, opting out of his contract.

Jackson, who won three straight championships with the team, agreed with Lakers owner Jerry Buss to end his tenure as coach. Buss offered Jackson another position with the organization, which Jackson will decide whether to accept soon, the team said in a statement.

"The experience of the past five years has been great," Jackson

said. "Three rings and a fourth opportunity makes this a bittersweet ending, but it's time to pause and reflect. I'm appreciative of all the Lakers, the organization, the fans and Dr. Buss."

Jackson's departure was expected even before he met with Buss following the coach's participation in season-ending interviews with several players earlier in the day.

Jackson's five-year, \$30 million contract expires at the end of the month. He was discussing a contract extension, but the Lakers broke off talks in February until after the season.

Jackson is well-known for his offbeat coaching style and motivational ploys, from practicing Zen philosophy to urging his players to meditate and buying them books for long road trips.

Jackson joined the Lakers in June 1999, and coached them to their first championship in 12 years in his first season. Two more titles followed, giving Jackson nine to tie him with former Boston coach Red Auerbach for the most in NBA history.

The Lakers were eliminated in the second round of the play-

offs by eventual champion San Antonio last year and reached the NBA Finals this year before losing to the Detroit Pistons.

In 14 seasons as a head coach, Jackson is 832-316 for a .725 winning percentage—best in NBA history. His 175 playoff wins are the most ever and his .717 postseason winning percentage is also tops.

Jackson, 58, coached the Michael Jordan-led Chicago Bulls to championships in 1992-94 and 1996-98. Jackson then took a year off before becoming coach of the Lakers. His teams in Chicago and Los Angeles had a 9-0 record in the NBA Finals before this year.

Among names mentioned already as possible successors are former Houston Rockets coach Rudy Tomjanovich, former Seattle SuperSonics and Milwaukee Bucks coach George Karl, and current Southern California coach Henry Bibby.

Other possibilities could be current Lakers assistants Jim Clemons and Kurt Rambis. Jackson succeeded Rambis five years ago.

There could be several more

changes to follow.

Karl Malone has already opted out of his contract, although he hopes to play for the Lakers if healthy. Gary Payton and Derek Fisher could follow Bryant and Malone and opt out of their deals.

General manager Mitch Kupchak made clear the team's priorities Thursday when he said the Lakers would do anything they need to keep Bryant and would try to accommodate O'Neal if he demands a trade.

Apparently upset over Kupchak's remarks, O'Neal canceled his exit interview and later requested a trade. O'Neal, who has been one of Jackson's biggest supporters, is under contract for two more years but could opt out after next season.

Kupchak said the Lakers will offer Bryant the maximum allowed—seven years and more than \$140 million. That's a lot more money and one year longer than any other team can offer.

O'Neal, Bryant and Fisher all joined the Lakers in 1996. Bryant had his differences with Jackson, especially over the triangle offense employed by Jackson.



AP
Los Angeles Lakers head coach Phil Jackson answers questions after their 100-87 loss to the Detroit Pistons in Game 5 of the NBA Finals at the Palace of Auburn Hills, Mich., Tuesday, June 15, 2004.

Kotsay drives in two as Athletics beat Cubs

 CHICAGO (AP) — M a r k

Kotsay homered and drove in another run, and the Oakland Athletics spoiled Sammy Sosa's return from a month on the disabled list with a 2-1 victory over the Chicago Cubs on Friday.

Sosa, who went 0-for-4 in his first game since May 16, had a chance to tie the score with two outs in the ninth. With fans standing and chanting "SAM-MEE! SAM-MEE," Sosa grounded out to short to end the game.

"I'm just happy to be back," Sosa said. "I want to do the best that I can, but I didn't have any luck today. They pitched me great. I'll see you tomorrow."

Kotsay finished 2-for-4, improving to .466 with four homers and 19 RBIs in his last 19 games.

Mark Redman (5-3) scattered four hits and an unearned run over eight innings, walking one and striking out six. Chad Bradford pitched the ninth for his first save in two chances.

"It's tough to lose another one-run game, but what can I say?" manager Dusty Baker said. "Matty (Clement) threw a great game. If it hadn't been for Kotsay, they wouldn't have gotten anything."

Clement (7-5) was solid, giving up seven hits and two runs in eight innings while striking out eight and walking none.

Mariners 5, Pirates 4

In Pittsburgh, Jamie Moyer pitched six solid innings and hit a two-run single, leading Seattle over Pittsburgh.

Moyer (6-2) hasn't pitched in the NL since 1991, but he seems to enjoy facing his old league. He's allowed one run in 13 innings in consecutive interleague starts.

Royals 10, Phillies 4

In Philadelphia, Matt Stairs homered twice and Benito Santiago hit a three-run shot to lead Kansas City past Philadelphia.

Chris George (1-0) allowed four runs and nine hits—all singles—in 6 2-3 innings, helping the Royals win their third straight game—each by the same score.

White Sox 11, Expos 7

In Montreal, Carlos Lee went 4-for-6 with four RBIs and the Chicago White Sox extended Montreal's losing streak to seven.

Lee, who fell a triple short of the cycle, drove in the go-ahead run in the eighth with an RBI single off Luis Ayala (0-6) that made it 8-7.

Rangers 8, Marlins 1

In Miami, John Wasdin (1-0) won his first start in nearly six years and Alfonso Soriano drove in two runs as Texas beat Florida to snap a four-game losing streak.

Brad Fullmer's ninth homer, a three-run shot in the seventh, put the game out of reach.

Wasdin allowed six hits and



AP
Chicago Cubs right fielder Sammy Sosa acknowledges cheering fans in the Wrigley Field bleachers as he takes to the field against the Oakland Athletics, Friday, June 18, 2004, in Chicago.

a run in seven innings. He walked two and struck out one, winning his first start since July 29, 1998, as a member of the Boston Red Sox.

Indians 4, Braves 2

In Atlanta, Cliff Lee outpitched Mike Hampton to win for the first time in six starts, and Casey Blake hit a tiebreaking homer to lift Cleveland over Atlanta in their first meeting since the 1995 World Series.

Lee, who had four no-decisions and a loss after a 5-0 start, did not walk a batter in seven innings. The left-hander gave up two runs and six hits, striking out seven.

Mets 3, Tigers 2

In New York, Mike Cameron homered with two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning to give the New York Mets a victory over Detroit.

Cameron's ninth home run—and second in as many nights—came on a 2-2 pitch from reliever Danny Patterson (0-4) and sent the Mets to their second win in a row.

Astros 5, Angels 0

In Houston, Pete Munro combined with three relievers on a five-hitter, and Jeff Kent drove in three runs to lead Houston past Anaheim.

The Astros snapped a four-game losing streak and gave manager Jim Williams his 900th career victory. Williams is 900-778 in the majors.

Brewers 4, Twins 1

In Milwaukee, Ben Sheets pitched four-hit ball for six innings, and Chad Moeller hom-

ered in Milwaukee's victory over Minnesota.

Keith Ginter drove in two runs, and Brady Clark had an RBI single for the Brewers, who snapped Minnesota's three-game winning streak. The AL Central-leading Twins lost for only the third time in 11 games.

Rockies 5, Orioles 3

In Denver, Shawn Estes allowed two runs in seven innings for his first win in a month, and Todd Helton drove in three runs to help Colorado beat Baltimore.

Rafael Palmeiro hit career home run No. 538 and Jerry Hairston was a Homer short of the cycle, but the rest of the Orioles managed just five hits in losing their sixth straight.

Blue Jays 3, Padres 2

In San Diego, Frank Menechino homered on David Wells' fifth pitch for Toronto and Ted Lilly became the latest starter to shut down San Diego.

The Blue Jays snapped their four-game losing streak, winning for just the fourth time in their last 14 road games.

Devil Rays 6, Diamondbacks 2

In Phoenix, Jose Cruz Jr. hit a three-run homer to beat Randy Johnson and Arizona, and help Tampa Bay stretch its franchise-record winning streak to nine games.

Rey Sanchez added a run-scoring triple and Geoff Blum an RBI double for the streaking Devil Rays, who have won 20 of 26 overall. They also snapped Johnson's six-game winning streak in the first meeting between these 1998 expansion teams.

Red Sox 14, Giants 9

In San Francisco, pinch-hitter Kevin Millar hit a go-ahead three-run homer in the fifth inning as Boston powered past San Francisco.

David Ortiz and Manny Ramirez also homered in the fifth, and Trot Nixon and Doug Mirabelli hit back-to-back home runs in the ninth for Boston.

Dodgers 6, Yankees 3

In Los Angeles, the Dodgers picked up where they left off 23 years ago against the New York Yankees.

Jeff Weaver beat his former team, Juan Encarnacion drove in the go-ahead run and Los Angeles won in the first regular-season meeting between two of baseball's most storied franchises.

Playing before the largest regular-season crowd in Dodger Stadium history, the Yankees lost back-to-back games for the first time since May 21-22 at Texas.

Cardinals 4, Reds 3

In St. Louis, Ken Griffey Jr. came up empty again in his bid to hit his 500th homer.

Albert Pujols homered off Mike Matthews (1-1) to lead off the bottom of the 10th inning to give the St. Louis Cardinals a victory over the Cincinnati Reds, extending their winning streak to five games.

Griffey was 0-for-4, taking a called third strike in the second, lining out to shortstop in the fourth, flying out to center in the seventh and tapping out on a checked swing in the ninth. He's 3-for-17 with two RBIs in four games since he homered Sunday against the Indians.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	42	23	.646	—
Boston	39	27	.591	3 1/2
Tampa Bay	30	34	.469	11 1/2
Toronto	29	38	.433	14
Baltimore	27	36	.429	14

Central Division

Minnesota	37	29	.561	—
Chicago	35	28	.556	1 1/2
Cleveland	32	33	.492	4 1/2
Detroit	31	35	.470	6
Kansas City	26	38	.406	10

West Division

Oakland	38	27	.585	—
Texas	35	29	.547	2 1/2
Anaheim	36	30	.545	2 1/2
Seattle	27	38	.415	11

Yesterday's Games

Oakland 2, Chicago Cubs 1
Seattle 5, Pittsburgh 4
Chicago White Sox 11, Montreal 7
Kansas City 10, Philadelphia 4
N.Y. Mets 3, Detroit 2
Texas 8, Florida 1
Cleveland 4, Atlanta 2
Houston 5, Anaheim 0
Milwaukee 4, Minnesota 1
Colorado 5, Baltimore 3
Toronto 3, San Diego 2
Tampa Bay 6, Arizona 2
Los Angeles 6, N.Y. Yankees 3
Boston 14, San Francisco 9

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Florida	37	30	.552	—
Philadelphia	34	31	.523	2
New York	32	34	.485	4 1/2
Atlanta	31	35	.470	5 1/2
Montreal	20	45	.308	16

Central Division

St. Louis	40	27	.597	—
Chicago	37	30	.552	3
Cincinnati	37	30	.552	3
Milwaukee	34	30	.531	4 1/2
Houston	34	32	.515	5 1/2
Pittsburgh	26	37	.413	12

West Division

Los Angeles	36	28	.563	—
San Francisco	35	32	.522	2 1/2
San Diego	33	33	.500	4
Arizona	27	40	.403	10 1/2
Colorado	24	42	.364	13

Yesterday's Games

Oakland 2, Chicago Cubs 1

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The Week in Sports

Championship week II



Verizon slotman Ed Cosino blocks the shot of Old Aces' Dave Camacho in the championship of the 40-and-over MBL Tuesday night.

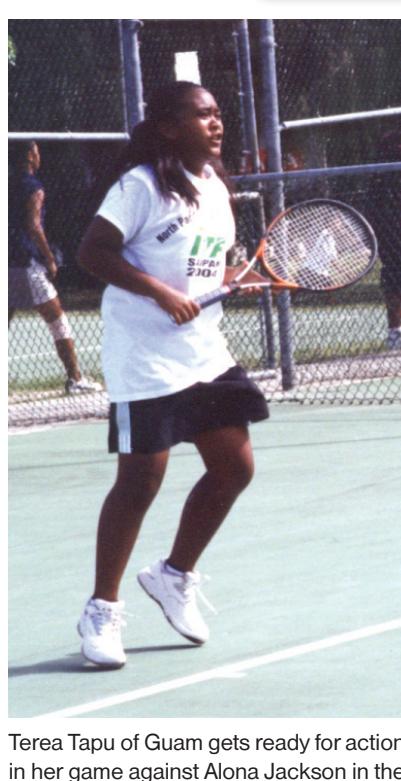
Ben Jones, left, and Glenna Palacios won the guests and members championships of the RP Independence Day Golf Tournament held at the Coral Ocean Point Resort golf course.



Douglas Puckett, left, won the low gross in the members division of last Sunday's RP Independence Day Golf Tournament. Puckett is shown here being congratulated by tourney director Mike Cruz.



Girls 18-and-under player Kelsey Isechal of Palau waits to return a serve in Court 4 of the AMP tennis courts.



Tereia Tapu of Guam gets ready for action in her game against Alona Jackson in the girls 14s.



CNMI's Johnny Johnson goes to the net during his match against then-defending champion Adam Rudolph of Guam at the AMP tennis courts.

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY MARK RABAGO
REPORTER

It was not only the Detroit Pistons who went home with a championship last week. In local sports Verizon, Northern Yankees, Faulkner, and a handful of golfers and tennis players also reached the summit of their respective sports.

In the 40-and-over Masters Basketball League, Verizon copped the title after topping Old Aces, 97-85, Tuesday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Northern Yankees, meanwhile, captured the championship of the Big League following its 5-2 victory over Old Aces last June 12 at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

Faulkner, for its part, upset favored Team 9 to bag first place in the 5th An-

nual Coors Light Co-ed Beach Volleyball League last Tuesday at the Pacific Islands Club sand court.

In golf, Glenna Palacios and Ben Jones won the members and guests divisions, respectively, of the Philippine Independence Day Golf Tournament held last July 12 at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Course.

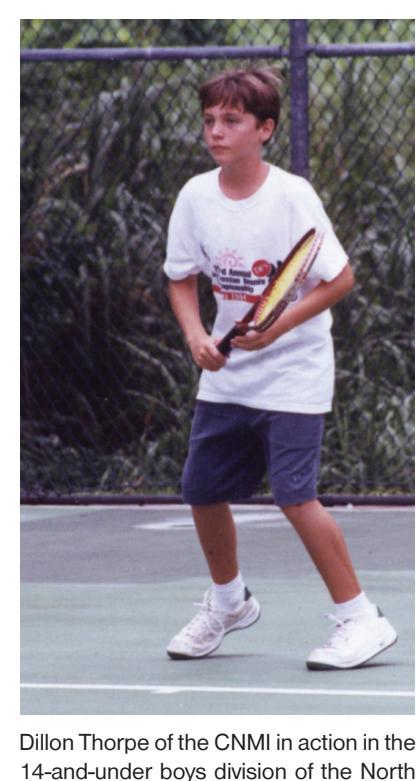
The same day in the same sport, the team of Steve Nygard, Joe "Kamikaze" Camacho, Charles Cepeda, and Alex Sablan corralled the Northwest Airlines 60th Commemorative Golf Tournament at the Lao Lao Bay Golf Resort.

And just this Friday and Thursday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts, Guam's Dean Dedicatoria and Michelle Pang and the CNMI's Kanani Ashraf and Ji Hoon Heo were crowned champions of the North Pacific Qualifying Tennis Tournament.



Verizon sparkplug Frank Iglesias feeds teammate Danny Bicera in the first half of their game at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Tim Paez of Verizon and Camacho battle for the rebound.



Midion Neth of FSM goes to his serving motion during pool play of the NPQ.



Dillon Thorpe of the CNMI in action in the 14-and-under boys division of the North Pacific Qualifying Tennis Tournament.



Mickelson, Maruyama tied for Open lead

Phil Mickelson is developing a healthy appetite for majors.

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Championship week II

It was not only the Detroit Pistons who went home with a championship last week. In local sports Verizon, Northern Yankees, Faulkner, and a handful of golfers and tennis players also reached the summit of their respective sports.

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Another season, another championship

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY MARK RABAGO
REPORTER

Like a fine bottle of vintage wine, Verizon just seem to get better with age.

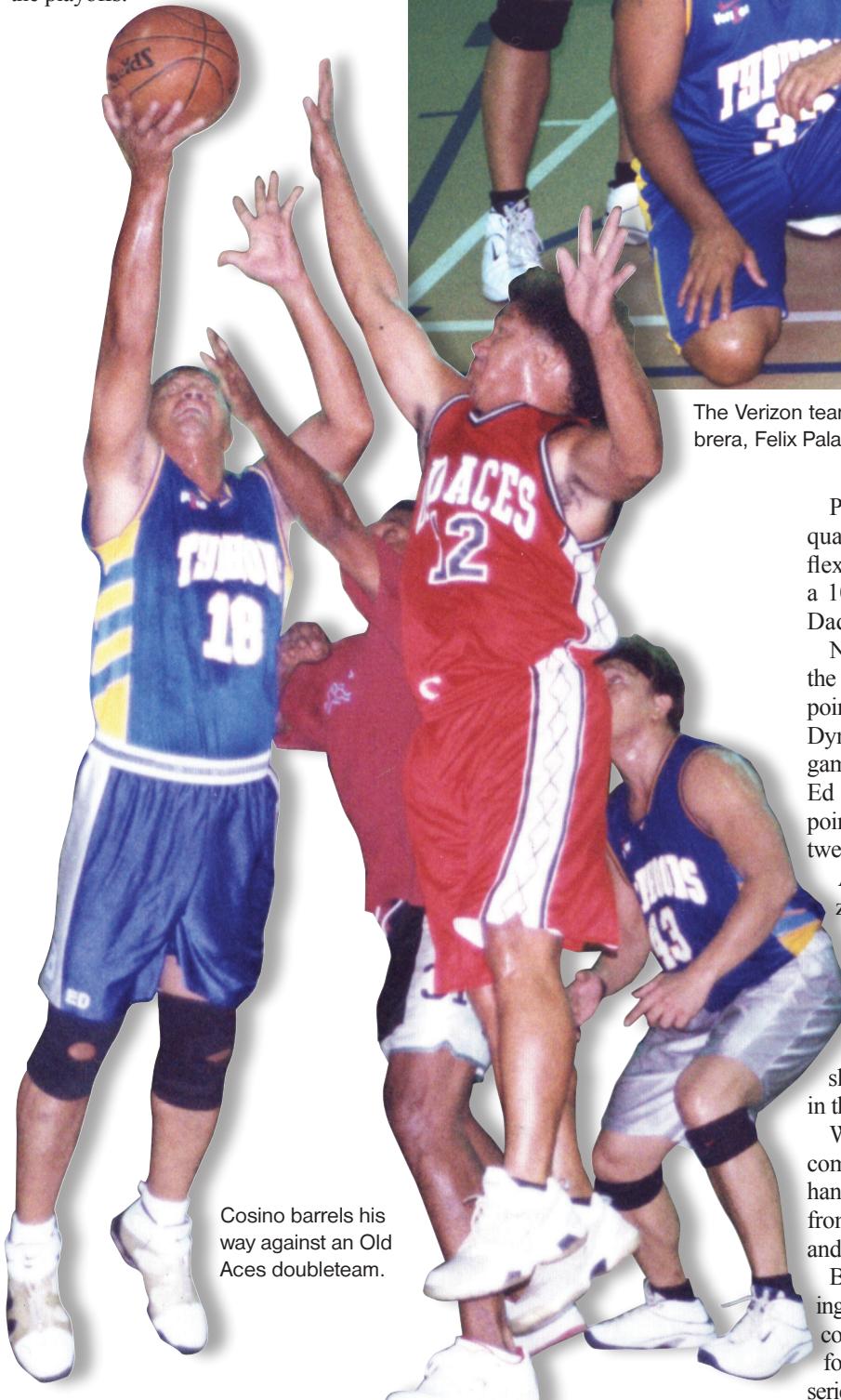
Save for last year's debacle against Old Aces in the 35-and-over, no team has ever dominated the Masters Basketball League ranks like Verizon.

That fact was on full display for all to see last Tuesday evening when the Tony Sablan-coached quintet ran roughshod over rival Old Aces in Game 1 of the championship.

But that's getting ahead of Verizon's fairytale 2004 season.

The team started off with two wins before a hiccup against a very capable Dyno-Sores team derailed its perfect season.

Shaken up from its complacency, Verizon racked up seven straight victories to win the pennant and guaranteed itself a bye in the opening round of the playoffs.



Cosino barrels his way against an Old Aces doubleteam.



The Verizon team, counter clockwise from left, Tim Paez, Jack Palacios, Danny Bicera, Doc Brostrom, Ed Cosino, Dado Vistal, Danny Cabrera, Felix Palacios, playing-coach Tony Sablan, Frank Iglesias, and John Dela Cruz. Not in photo is Ed Manalili.

Paired against CK Legends in the quarterfinals last June 1, Verizon flexed its muscles and ran away with a 100-83 win led by veteran gunner Dado Vistal's 42 points.

Needing only a win to advance to the championship, Verizon let a 20-point lead slip away before nipping Dyno-Sores, 81-76, last June 3. In that game, Vistal paired with 6'3" slotman Ed Cosino to score the team's final 3 points. The two scored 48 points between themselves the entire game.

And in the championship game, Verizon frustrated Old Aces gunner Tony Luzama and held in check playmaker Elias Rangamar to take home the title, 97-85.

Verizon played an almost perfect second half after failing to shrug off a stubborn Old Aces team in the first 20 minutes of the ballgame.

With Cosino and 6'4" Doc Brostrom coming late into the game, Verizon hung tough with great contributions from back-up big men Jack Palacios and Tim Paez.

But still Verizon had troubles containing Luzama and Rangamar in the open court and Old Aces appeared priming for an upset victory that would send the series to a winner-take-all Game 2.

Playing both ends of the floor then

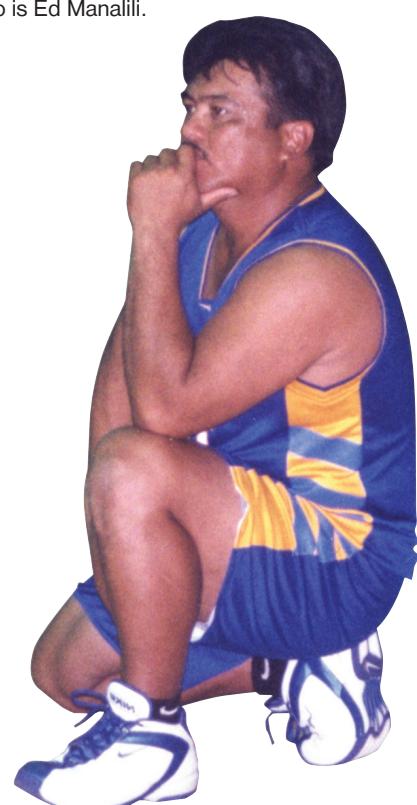
began to take its toll on Old Aces' famed backcourt. Verizon point guard Frank Iglesias was especially effective against a huffing and puffing Rangamar in the third and fourth quarters, as the 5'7" whippet-quick sentinel came away with 20 of his 26 points after intermission.

Vistal also came alive in the second half after being limited by Luzama's tight guarding in the first 20 minutes. The 6'1" former semi-pro player in the Philippines pumped in 12 of his 18 points in the second half.

Even Brostrom threw in two run-snapping baskets to turn the tide of battle. The last one with 3:11 to go quashed Old Aces' last-ditch stand and Verizon was able to pull off the 12-point win.

"Everyone played well. Jack and Tim kept us in the fight in the first half. Dado, Ed and Doc were steady in the second. But Frank was awesome the whole game and just ran their [Old Aces] guards to the ground after the break," said Sablan after the game.

Brostrom, meanwhile, said that like all of Verizon's championships the past half decade, the game—and in fact the entire season—was a total team effort. Cosino, Vistal and Bicera seem to agree, while Iglesias was just humbled by the whole thing and pointed to the



Playing-coach Sablan in a pensive mood in the second half of the championship.

rest of his teammates as the reason for the team's success.

The rest of the 2004 Masters Basketball League 40-and-over champion team is made up of Felix Palacios, John Dela Cruz, Danny Cabrera, and Ed Manalili.